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Contact: John Birtwell

Shawn Feddeman

(617) 727-2759

Charles McDonald

(617) 727-7775

**CELLUCCI, SWIFT AWARD BULLYING PREVENTION GRANTS**  
***Roll Out Proposal from State of Education Address for Safer Schools***

Governor Paul Cellucci and Lieutenant Governor Jane Swift today announced a series of grants to support safer schools and bullying prevention programs in six school systems. The grants, mentioned in the Governor's State of Education Address delivered yesterday, will help curb school violence by targeting bullies and victims of bullies, and providing prevention education programs in classrooms.

"These programs will help local school districts detect and target acts of bullying which sometimes flare into tragic confrontation," said Cellucci. "All facets of the community will be involved in identifying bullying behavior – parents, students, school administrators and teachers, as well as custodial and cafeteria staff."

"By developing clear rules and enlisting the entire community to prevent bullying, all students will benefit by educating both victims and perpetrators of bullying and remove this disruptive element to learning in the classroom," said Swift.

Six school systems will receive two-year Bullying Prevention Grants for

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programs beginning this fall. Primary and secondary schools in the communities of Boston, Lynn, Malden, Mansfield, Reading and Raynham will launch the first Bullying Prevention Programs. To start the programs, each community will receive a \$100,000 grant over two years, with the exception of Lynn and Malden. Lynn will receive \$150,000 over two years because 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders will be served in addition to the elementary school population. Malden will receive \$200,000 over two years due to the large number of students served – more than 1,100 – and because their unique community involvement plan augments the school-based plan and will serve as a pilot program. The program is one of several initiatives by the Cellucci-Swift Administration recommended by the Governor's Council on School Violence, which completed an exhaustive study of school violence last year.

The programs, funded with federal Byrne Grant money, will be implemented in the Samuel W. Mason Elementary School in Boston; the Lynn Community Charter School in Lynn; the Salemwood Elementary School in Malden; the Jordan/Jackson Elementary School in Mansfield; the Barrows School in Reading and the Lillie B. Merrill Elementary School in Raynham.

“As chairman of the Governor's Council on School Violence, these programs represent to me a unique method to prevent situations that could evolve into school violence,” said Public Safety Secretary Jane Perlov. “Last school year we trained hundreds of school, public safety and administrative personnel in responses to potential critical incidents. This year's efforts are geared towards preventing acts of bullying

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which could provoke violent outbursts.”

A preliminary assessment shows that bullying is a major problem in some Massachusetts schools, with a survey in one school showing that 64 percent of third graders and 50 percent of fourth graders worry about bullying on a near daily basis. Another school reported that 87 percent of referrals to a school disciplinary committee indicated bullying behavior. Teachers expressed frustration about how to deal with the bullying and subtle intimidation that goes on within and outside the school environment.

The program targets primary and secondary school children by involving all parties in discouraging bullying and providing support and protection for victims. Studies show that victim/bully problems were cut in half, school climate improved and antisocial behavior such as theft, vandalism and truancy dropped by using this curriculum. All communities that receive the grants will have intensive technical assistance from Nancy Mullin-Rindler of the Wellesley College’s Center for Research on Women, and Dr. Susan Limber of Clemson University’s Institute on Family and Neighborhood Life.

An anonymous student questionnaire, a school conference, and formation of a Bullying Prevention Coordinating Committee at each school are among program initiatives. Periods during recess time and lunch will be particularly watched. Other activities include meeting with parents, interventions with children identified as bullies and victims, classroom discussions to increase knowledge and foster pro-social behavior.

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